

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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# News Release

Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts  
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## Harrisonburg High School students win State Environmental Honors



Harrisonburg High School represented Rockingham and Page at Virginia's Envirothon, a natural resources competition. Team members are Carly Byers, Yang Liu, Martha Skelley, Camila Domonoske, and Olivia Quach, coached by Harrisonburg High School Ross Bair. The Shenandoah Valley Soil and Water Conservation District sponsored the (Harrisonburg High School Team. As the regional first place winner, Harrisonburg High School), coached by Ross Bair, Environmental Science teacher at HHS, advanced to the state competition held May 20-21 at the W.E. Skelton 4H Center near Roanoke.

Envirothon features five "in-the-field" test stations – soils, wildlife, aquatics, forestry and current environmental issue – where teams answer questions in both written and hands-on formats. During an oral presentation teams propose a management solution related to the current environmental issue to a panel of judges consisting of industry and natural resource professionals. This year's issue is "Alternative Renewable Energy."

"The intense study required for this contest helps prepare students for college entrance exams, as well as possible careers in field associated with natural resources," said Ricky Rash, president of the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

The Virginia (State) Envirothon as held May 20-21, 2007 at the W.E. Skelton 4H Education Center in Wirtz, where seventeen teams competed. The Harrisonburg High School Team placed first overall and as the state champions will represent Virginia at the Canon Envirothon to be held at Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Geneva, New York, on July 29 - August 3, 2007. Last year Virginia's Envirothon team (from Fort Defiance High School in Augusta County) won the Canon Envirothon and each team member received a \$ 5,000 college scholarship.

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The team from Harrisonburg High School will travel to Hobart and William Smith College in New York to battle it out at the Canon Envirothon, sponsored by Canon. The Shenandoah Valley Soil and Water Conservation District and the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts need help sponsoring students for next year's Envirothon.

If you can help, or would like to know more about starting an Envirothon team at your high school through 4-H, FFA, Ecology Club or home school group, contact Dana Roberts at the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts at (804) 559-0324 or [dana.roberts@vaswcd.org](mailto:dana.roberts@vaswcd.org).

Powhatan High School will also represent Virginia and the Monacan Soil and Water Conservation District at the National Future Farmers of America (FFA) Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana, being held October 24-27, 2007.

Envirothon is sponsored by the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts and Virginia's 47 Soil and Water Conservation Districts with funding provided by the Virginia Manufacturers Association Outreach Group, The Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund, The Virginia Chapter of Soil and Water Conservation Society, and the Canon Envirothon.

**State Competition Results:**

First Place – Harrisonburg High School, Shenandoah Valley SWCD  
Second Place – Fort Defiance High School, Headwaters SWCD  
Third Place – Albemarle High School, Thomas Jefferson SWCD

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